

Amendments to the Claims:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Canceled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strike through~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (canceled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Applicant reserves the right to pursue any canceled claims at a later date.

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A fuel cell, comprising a separator disposed between two electrolyte-electrode units, wherein

the separator is formed from two plates each having ~~rib-shaped~~an embossing and touching at contact surfaces, ~~wherein the rib-shaped embossing on each plate includes a plurality of straight and parallel ribs and the plates are rotated relative to one another so that the ribs on one plate has an axis of symmetry that is offset relative to an axis of symmetry on the other plate,~~
wherein the embossings are formed as circular depressions, and wherein the embossings of the plates are offset relative to one another;

a first fluid chamber for a coolant is formed between the two plates and a second fluid chamber for a gas is formed between each plate and the adjacent electrolyte-electrode unit in each case; and,

the first fluid chamber for the coolant has two subchambers, each subchamber facing one of the two plates, where the subchambers are arranged adjacent and non-planar to each other and separated by a central plane comprising an overflow section configured to direct the coolant flow alternately through the two and non-planar subchambers.

13. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 12, wherein the plates have approximately identical embossings.

14.-19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 12, wherein the contact surfaces are gold-plated.

21. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 13, wherein the contact surfaces are gold-plated.

22. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 12, wherein the contact surfaces are distributed approximately uniformly over the surface of the separator.

23. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 13, wherein the contact surfaces are distributed approximately uniformly over the surface of the separator.

24. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 12, wherein the total surface area of the contact surfaces is at least 10% of the surface area of the separator.

25. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 13, wherein the total surface area of the contact surfaces is at least 10% of the surface area of the separator.

26. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 12, wherein the total surface area of the contact surfaces is no more than 90% of the surface area of the separator.

27. (previously presented) The fuel cell according to claim 13, wherein the total surface area of the contact surfaces is no more than 90% of the surface area of the separator.

28. (canceled)

29. (currently amended) A heating device of a fuel cell, having
a flow directing element disposed between opposite edge plates, wherein the flow directing element is formed as a heating element from two plates each having an embossing, wherein the embossings are formed as circular depressions, and wherein the embossings of the plates are offset relative to one another; and

a flow chamber being formed between the heating element and an edge plate in each case and another flow chamber being formed between the plates, the last mentioned flow chamber having subchambers, each subchamber facing a plate and comprising an overflow section configured to provide a flow path solely on an alternating basis, ~~wherein the embossing is rib shaped including straight and parallel ribs and on one plate has an axis of symmetry that is offset relative to an axis of symmetry on the other plate.~~

30. (currently amended) The heating device according to claim 29, wherein the fuel cell includes:

a separator disposed between two electrolyte-electrode units, wherein
the separator is formed from two plates each having an ~~essentially rib shaped embossing~~ and touching at contact surfaces, wherein ~~the rib shaped embossing on each plate includes a plurality of generally straight and parallel ribs and one plate has an axis of symmetry that is offset relative to an axis of symmetry of the other plate~~ the embossings are formed as circular depressions, and wherein the embossings of the plates are offset relative to one another;

a first fluid chamber for a coolant is formed between the two plates and a second fluid chamber for a gas is formed between each plate and the adjacent electrolyte-electrode unit in each case; and[[,]]

the first fluid chamber for the coolant has two subchambers, each subchamber facing one of the two plates, where the subchambers are arranged adjacent and non-planar to each other and separated by a central plane comprising an overflow section configured to direct the coolant flow alternately through the two non-planar subchambers.